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Cosmopolitanism and Communitarianism – How Globalization Is Reshaping Politics in the Twenty-First Century

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1.1 Introduction

The twentieth century is considered the century of class cleavage between capital and labour. This class cleavage structured conflicts within the political systems of the developed world, and, in the second half of the century, even in world politics, by setting the East against the West. The concept of cleavage has been especially important in enabling the development of West European political systems to be grasped as a series of formative conflicts. Each of these cleavages was based on structurally differing interests that, along with their corresponding political ideas and organizations, shaped the party systems in most Western European countries (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Rokkan 1970; Rokkan et al. 1999). From this point of view, the industrial revolution in the second half of the nineteenth century divided societies into capital owners, with their interest in profitable investments, and the working class, with its interest in humane working conditions, higher wages and social security (Mair 2006; Bartolini 2007). The Right defended free markets and minimal state intervention; the Left stood for a strong state and political regulation.

Politics in the early twenty-first century is undergoing tectonic shifts that question the persistence of class conflict as the decisive political fault line. These changes are occurring at both ends of the political spectrum. Among the Left, a mainstream shaped by the 'Third Way' politics of Tony Blair, Gerhard Schröder and the Clintons is being challenged by a rising new radical Left exemplified by people like Bernie Sanders within the United States (US) Democratic Party and parties such as Podemos in Spain, Syriza in Greece and Die Linke in Germany. Outside party politics, this new radical Left has been vocal on the transnational level with massive protest mobilization in the field of international trade, which

successfully challenged the planned European Union (EU)–US Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) and the US–Canada Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA). This transnational wing of the ‘anti-globalization Left’ goes back at least as far as the Battle in Seattle in 1999. On the other side, the conservative establishment faces increasingly strong challenges by new contenders both from within the ranks of mainstream parties and in the shape of new parties such as the National Front in France, the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP), the Alternative for Germany (AfD) and Geert Wilders’ Freedom Party (PVV) in the Netherlands. Although more strongly focused on party politics than the new radical Left, the ‘New Right’, too, has manifested itself beyond party politics, for instance; in Patriotic Europeans Against the Islamisation of the West (PEGIDA) and the ‘Identitarian Movement’, both of which are active in several European countries.

The year 2016 saw a dramatic acceleration of these shifts. In the United States, Donald Trump’s primary campaign humiliated Republican establishment contenders such as Jeb Bush and Marco Rubio; and Hillary Clinton had to fight a long and hard battle to beat Bernie Sanders. In the United Kingdom, the Brexit referendum surprisingly brought victory to the ‘leave’ camp, and split both the Labour and Conservative parties in two. In the Austrian presidential elections of 2016, for the first time in the country’s history, neither of the two mainstream parties – the Social Democrats (SPÖ) and the Christian Democrats (ÖVP), who had historically alternated occupancy of the presidency and the chancellorship – managed to get their candidates past the first round. Instead, the run-off second round of voting was contested between candidates of two relatively new parties from the left and right flanks, the Greens and the Freedom Party of Austria (FPÖ), which together gained almost 60 per cent of the vote in the first round, while the protagonists of the two ‘mainstream’ parties together obtained just over 20 per cent. In September 2017, for the first time in post-war history, a party to the right of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) entered the German parliament: the AfD, previously unrepresented in parliament, became the third-largest party with 13 per cent of the vote. Their votes came primarily from the mainstream right CDU and the mainstream left SPD, who both lost one-fifth of their electorate. Historically, the CDU and SPD had together

captured over three quarters of the vote. In 2017, they were down to 33 and 21 per cent, respectively.

As we will demonstrate in this book, the new fault lines around globalization can no longer be fully captured along the classic redistributional left–right axis. In important respects, they run perpendicular to it. Since the end of the Cold War, parties of the mainstream Left and Right, which had transformed themselves in the decades before from ‘class’ to catch-all parties (Kirchheimer 1965), have converged further on pro-globalization positions on a range of issues, such as support for European integration, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and trade agreements such as TTIP. Even on immigration, probably the most divisive of the issues related to globalization, differences between the mainstream Left and Right have become much smaller than they used to be – both because mainstream left parties have distanced themselves from earlier experiments with multicultural policies and because Conservatives have, at least in large parts of Western Europe, embraced pro-immigration views. Germany’s grand coalition of Social Democrats and Angela Merkel’s Christian Democrats is perhaps the best example of this new mainstream pro-immigration consensus.

There are good reasons to believe that a new fault line has emerged that pits opponents and proponents of globalization against each other. We therefore ask, in a first set of questions: Has globalization indeed produced new conflict formations that transcend the old binary structure of politics based on capital versus labour? Are we seeing a new conflict line being drawn between globalists and anti-globalists produced by the social revolution of globalization? Is this a new cleavage replacing the old one, or a new conflict line complementing the old divide?

In this book, we label those who advocate open borders, universal norms and supranational authority as ‘cosmopolitans’; and those who defend border closure, cultural particularism and national sovereignty as ‘communitarians’. We are aware that political ideologies are related to normative theories. Political ideologies contain simplifications and normatively indefensible components, and they are selective and much less coherent than political philosophies. We have, nevertheless, chosen these designations, both of which have their roots in recognized and respected political-philosophical traditions, to distance ourselves from the highly moralized terms that dominate and increasingly poison the

political debate. Those on the cosmopolitan side like to depict their opponents not as representatives of a legitimate political alternative, but as ‘narrow-minded chauvinists under the spell of populist demagogues’. Conversely, those in the communitarian camp often describe their opponents in at least as derogatory terms as ‘crooked, corrupt, and deceitful traitors to the common people’.

We use the terms cosmopolitanism and communitarianism to grasp the core elements of two opposing political ideologies, not least in order to reveal and understand the normativity behind both of these positions and, where possible, to link them back to structurally induced interests on both sides. By using the terms cosmopolitans and communitarians, however, we in no way wish to legitimize or give a seal of moral-philosophical approval to either alternative. Our use of the term cosmopolitan will not prevent us from asking to what extent presumably universalist stances are self-serving and linked to the material benefits and political opportunities that globalization offers to some actors more than others. Neither are we blind to the fact that the label communitarian is sometimes a kind way of describing ugly phenomena such as racism or aggressive chauvinism. Some prominent proponents of globalization are just extreme neo-liberals aiming to identify new business opportunities, while some of the critics of globalization are bigots and demagogues, no matter which moral-philosophical standards one judges them by. However, while there may be a good deal of hypocrisy in the current debates about the pros and cons of globalization, we believe that focusing on them distracts attention from what is at the core of these controversies. One of the central goals of this volume is to get a better understanding of the normative basis and the political ideologies behind this confrontation. We intend, therefore, to move away from the conception that is implicit in many analyses of right-wing populist movements – namely that things like migration, free trade and European integration are historically inevitable, rational and enlightened choices, thus relegating alternatives to the domain of backward irrationalism and seeing them as atavistic in relation to the requirements of modernization (see, e.g., Kitschelt 1988; Betz 1994; Beck 2002).

Communitarians and cosmopolitans can be found on both sides of the traditional left–right cleavage. Right-wing cosmopolitans emphasize open economic borders, whereas other cosmopolitans advocate political re-regulation at a level beyond the nation state. Left-wing

communitarians usually emphasize the dangers of globalization for equality and solidarity within states. Right-wing communitarians, by contrast, highlight the dangers of globalization for national cultural cohesion. With respect to some issues, left- and right-wing communitarians take different positions. This is particularly true for their stances on immigration. However, on other globalization-related issues, left and right communitarians often have more in common with each other than with the cosmopolitan camp. Euroscepticism, for instance, has the shape of a U-curve with peaks on the two ends of the traditional one-dimensional political spectrum (Hooghe et al. 2002). It is this implicit alliance of left and right Eurosceptics that has made the Brexit campaign a success. Similarly, campaigns against international free trade agreements such as CETA and TTIP have increasingly drawn support from both sides of the communitarian camp. Their combined strength brought the TTIP negotiations to a complete standstill and forced Hillary Clinton to revise her pro-trade stance and move into the direction of the more protectionist positions of her rivals Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump. These developments reflect an important shift on the part of right-wing communitarians. Early radical right-wing parties in Europe, such as the National Front under the leadership of Jean-Marie Le Pen in the 1980s and 1990s or the FPÖ under Jörg Haider, as well as most of the Scandinavian right-wing populist parties, took neo-liberal positions on economic issues. According to political scientist Herbert Kitschelt (1995), the combination of economic neo-liberalism and cultural nationalism was the winning formula for right-wing populism. This seems to be less and less true. The new leaders of these parties, including Jean-Marie Le Pen's daughter Marine Le Pen, Geert Wilders in the Netherlands, and, of course, Donald Trump, are now exploring whether in fact economic protectionism plus cultural nationalism – that is, a coherent communitarian position – is the new winning formula (see also De Lange 2007). Against this backdrop, we ask a second set of questions: Do the labels cosmopolitanism and communitarianism grasp the contentious issues between the two camps? In which regards do the new actors deviate from ideal-typical cosmopolitanism and communitarianism? What does this mean for the left–right continuum in politics?

A third set of questions induced by the developments described refers to the social bases of cosmopolitanism and communitarianism.

Do political parties still represent the people sufficiently or do we observe a growing gap between elites and mass publics? Which economic, social and political actors are found on which side of these conflicts? What is the social basis of the new conflict line? In this respect, we roughly distinguish three explanations.

An *economic explanation* points to deep-seated structural conflicts rooted in the way in which globalization reshapes our societies by affecting the material interests of distinct groups differently: capital ownership versus labour-based income, large and small businesses, export-oriented and domestically oriented economic sectors, high-skilled and low-skilled labour. A *cultural explanation* points to different lifeworlds and the role of the transnational and the international within them. In this view, the conflict is about how to combine universal humanitarian norms and particularistic cultural attachments and solidarities. Most people feel deeply about and cherish both, but they are not easy to reconcile in practice. The *political explanation* points to the tension between the need to address social and environmental problems that are increasingly global in scope and cannot be solved within the context of single nation states, on the one hand, and upholding standards of accountability, participation and representativeness that have historically been tied to the nation state, on the other.

In the remainder of this introduction, we first discuss debates about globalization as the driver of a potential new cleavage, which have occurred in different subfields of social science. Second, we develop our understanding of cosmopolitanism and communitarianism as political ideologies. Third, we address questions regarding the determinants of where actors position themselves on the new fault line and what might explain the differences in the way the fault line manifests itself in different settings. Finally, we present our research design and summarize the most important findings.

1.2 Globalization and Cleavage Theory

To make sense of the new conflict formations, we draw on the conceptual framework of cleavage theory. The core of the notion of cleavages is compelling and elegant. In line with liberal conflict theory (Coser 1957; Dahrendorf 1959), conflicts are seen as providing the structure of modern societies. Cleavage theory, however, shifts the focus from specific conflicts (differences in positions between social

actors) to conflict lines (a set of conflicts with at least some actors taking the same sides across a number of issues). The interaction of different conflict lines then produces conflict formations. Cleavages refer to the dominant conflict lines. The cleavage theory of Stein Rokkan (see Rokkan et al. 1999) and Seymour Martin Lipset (1960; see also Lipset and Rokkan 1967) apprehends the history of modern Europe as a partially sequential and partially parallel set of four social cleavages: a core–periphery cleavage, a rural–urban cleavage, a religious cleavage and a class cleavage (Lipset and Rokkan 1967: 47). Each of the cleavages was accompanied by substantial societal transformations creating structural divisions. Moreover, each cleavage required a social revolution that created a critical juncture that allowed the polarization of new groups of actors in relation to the pre-existing structural divisions. For the class cleavage, for instance, Lipset and Rokkan (1967) point to the rise of industrial capitalism as the structural background condition and the Russian Revolution as the critical event that finally polarized the existing classes (workers and capitalists) and set them against one another. The new social structuration caused by the industrial revolution was made manifest by the critical juncture. These background conditions identified by cleavage theory clearly reach beyond national borders, which is why social cleavages structure different national political systems and different political arenas in similar ways.

For descriptive purposes, the concept of political cleavage has three key components. A full, ideal-typical cleavage involves (a) structural interests, political ideologies and political organizations that converge along a set of contentious issues – as Peter Mair (2006: 373) put it, ‘[t]he shift from society to politics occurs when a particular social divide [structural component] becomes associated with a particular set of values or identities [normative component], and when this is then brought into the political world, and made politically relevant by means of an organized party or group [organizational component]’; (b) two camps that stand against each other across a large set of different issue areas; while it may be theoretically possible to think of a ‘cleavage in one country’, all historical cleavages prove to have played out in (c) different political arenas or political systems at the same time.

Globalization clearly has the potential to be a formative structural development of the kind that may give rise to fundamental changes in

societal conflict lines and political alignments. If globalization or societal denationalization is understood as the relative increase of cross-border flows in goods, pollutants, people, capital, cultural symbols and moral judgements, then it can be stated that globalization affects individuals and societal groups in a fundamental but distinct way. Ronald Rogowski's (1989) seminal *Commerce and Coalitions* is paradigmatic for this line of thinking. He used the Stolper-Samuelson theorem – free trade benefits those factors of production that are abundant in a given country – in order to theorize the political effects of globalization. According to the Stolper-Samuelson theorem, open borders privilege abundant resources, that is, in the Western world capital and in the poorer countries of the world land and labour. On this basis, Rogowski was able to make predictions about the development of political conflicts within domestic political systems, mainly the revival of class conflicts and conflicts between rural areas and cities. According to this argument, the old cleavage between capital and labour would be transformed by putting new issues at the centre of the struggle – above all the economic openness of national societies – but the opposing parties would remain the same.

The subsequent debate in political economy pointed to sectoral conflicts that might also arise as a consequence of economic globalization. Jeffry A. Frieden (1991) argued that international financial integration does indeed favour capital over labour, particularly in developed countries, in the long run. But in the short run, the effects of integration turn on asset specificity with respect to both use and location. Accordingly, increasing capital mobility impacts producers of tradable goods and services differently from producers of non-tradables (see also Becker and Schwartz 2005). In this perspective, sectoral conflicts based on the transferability of goods and skills may, at least occasionally, cross-cut the conflict between capital and labour.

The question of new conflict formations has been studied in other academic disciplines as well. In International Relations and European Studies, it has been suggested that the politicization of international institutions like the EU, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations (UN) Security Council has been due to an underlying conflict about the recognition of international authority (De Wilde and Zürn 2012; Zürn et al. 2012). A comparative analysis has identified two different types of politicization process – the politicization of problems associated with open but unregulated borders and the

politicization of the international institutions that have been established in response to these problems (Zürn and Ecker-Ehrhardt 2013). From this perspective, conflicts over the degree of globalization and conflicts over global regulations gain prominence. Therefore, the political conflicts around which societal mobilization evolves no longer take place within the container of the nation state, but are precisely about the boundaries of both the nation and the territorial state.

In political sociology, finally, the rise of new party landscapes in European democracies has been debated under the label of new political cleavages pointing to right-wing populism as one pole of a new conflict visible in many of the European party systems (Kitschelt 1995; Steenbergen and Marks 2004). In this view, a new dimension of politics ranging from green/alternative/libertarian (GAL) to traditional/authoritarian/nationalist (TAN) has been added to the old left–right dimension. Party positions on the issue of European integration have been found to be more strongly determined by the new dimension than the old (Hooghe et al. 2002). More recently, the seminal work of Hanspeter Kriesi, Edgar Grande and colleagues has taken up this line of thinking and identified a new cleavage in Western European party systems orthogonal to the one between capital and labour. By analysing the positions of numerous societal actors regarding three themes (economic liberalization, migration and regional integration), they point to a cleavage between demarcationists – those who want to strengthen national borders and stand against European integration – and integrationists – those who are in favour of open borders and more European integration (Kriesi et al. 2008; 2012).

All these analyses point to the importance of conflict constellations that structure political systems. They argue that such constellations may change fundamentally in the age of globalization. Taken together, one can see these academic debates from the 1970s onwards as a reaction to, and part of a politicization of, globalization. The goal of this book is to integrate these different strands of research in order to give a more encompassing account of cleavages, conflict lines and conflict formations in a globalized world. We start with a first set of questions regarding the effects of globalization on political conflicts: Is this politicization of globalization a pluralist one in the sense that conflict constellations differ from issue to issue and from country to country? Or do we observe a more general pattern that cuts across issues, countries and political or polity levels?

In response to these questions, we do not necessarily expect to find one single fully developed global cleavage between cosmopolitans and communitarians that is similarly structured across all countries, polity levels and issues and that dominates all other conflict lines. Yet by using the concept of cleavage based on structurally differing interests, corresponding political ideologies and political organizations, a set of analytical tools is applied that helps to make sense of such new conflict formations to the extent that they arise.

1.3 Cosmopolitanism and Communitarianism as Political Ideologies

Peter Mair (2006) has correctly pointed out that structural divisions do not suffice for the emergence of a cleavage; political organizations that bundle issues and groups on the two sides of the cleavage are also required (see also Bartolini 2005). The tying together of issues by political parties and associations also presupposes an ideational background that gives meaning to the bundling and coherence to the different positions taken with respect to these issues. In the case of the class cleavage, for instance, this was provided by liberalism and socialism as political theories, which were translated into political ideologies and party programmes. Moreover, it is only these ideational backgrounds that give political meaning to the structural differences. Without Marxist and – more broadly – socialist theory, the positional difference between employers and employees would not have become one between capitalists and workers, and their differences would not have amounted to a class conflict.¹ In this sense, the ideas of Marx have become historically much more relevant than historical materialism itself suggested they would be.

Moreover, it is only this ideational background that makes positions taken in different issue areas comparable and thus possibly similar. For instance, a position supporting a progressive tax system and one in favour of a universal health insurance system would seem to be quite independent of one another if there were not a political world view that calls for significant corrections to the distributive outcomes produced

¹ In addition to the counterfactual, the US example provides support for this. Where Marxism never took root, the class cleavage was weak (see Sombart 1906).